

## Message Text

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ACTION L-03

INFO OCT-01 EA-11 IO-14 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

SS-20 USIA-15 SAM-01 ACDA-19 SCA-01 AF-10 ARA-16

EUR-25 NEA-11 SAJ-01 DRC-01 /188 W

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FM USMISSION GENEVA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4094

INFO AMEMBASSY SAIGON

USUN NEW YORK 78

C O N F I D E N T I A L GENEVA 1054

FOR L- MR. MAW FROM ALDRICH

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, ICRC, VN

SUBJECT: DIPLOMATIC CONFERENCE ON LAW OF WAR

1. EVEN BEFORE DIPLOMATIC CONFERENCE FORMALLY CONVENES, POLITICAL QUESTIONS HAVE SO CONTAMINATED ATMOSPHERE THAT SERIOUS SEARCH FOR IMPROVEMENTS IN INTERNATIONAL LAW CERTAIN TO BE DELAYED FOR SOME DAYS. WHETHER CONFERENCE WILL LATER BE ABLE TURN TO CONSTRUCTIVE DEVELOPMENT OF LAW REMAINS TO BE SEEN AND WILL DEPEND LARGELY UPON PRESENTLY UNKNOWN MOTIVES AND PERSISTENCE OF COMMUNISTS AND AFRICANS, WHO HAVE BEEN MAIN TROUBLEMAKERS.

2. AFRICANS HAVE BROUGHT DELEGATES OUT OF ALL THEIR GENEVA CLOSETS SO THAT 34 AFRICAN STATES ARE REPRESENTED (OUT OF TOTAL OF 120). KNOWLEDGE OF INTERNATIONAL LAW NOT EVIDENT IN MOST CASES, BUT ENERGY AND EAGERNESS TO PLAY POLITICAL GAMES SEEMS BOUNDLESS. MANY OBJECTIONS HAVE BEEN RAISED TO PROPOSED RULES OF PROCEDURE  
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AND TO DISTRIBUTION OF OFFICES SUGGESTED BY SWISS

GOVERNMENT, AND GREAT PASSION HAS BEEN EXHIBITED FOR INVITATIONS TO ARAB AND AFRICAN NATIONAL LIBERATION MOVEMENTS, GUINEA-BISSAU, AND PRG. USSR, EE, AND DRV DELS HAVE ENCOURAGED AND SUPPORTED AFRICAN BEHAVIOR.

3. IT IS TOO EARLY TO BE CERTAIN OF THEIR INTENTIONS, BUT BEHAVIOR TO DATE IS FULLY CONSISTENT WITH THESIS THAT THESE COUNTRIES ARE WORRIED ABOUT SUBSTANTIVE LEGAL RULES BEFORE THE CONFERENCE AND ARE USING POLITICAL ISSUES TO DELAY OR PREVENT SERIOUS WORK ON SUCH RULES. ALTERNATIVE EXPLANATION IS THAT THEY SIMPLY DO NOT CARE ABOUT THE SUBSTANCE, HAVE LITTLE INTEREST IN BECOMING PARTIES TO ANY ULTIMATE AGREEMENT, AND CANNOT RESIST OPPORTUNITY TO USE CONFERENCE TO SEEK SHORT-TERM POLITICAL GAINS. WE INTEND TO CONTINUE PRESSING FOR QUICK AND ACCEPTABLE RESOLUTION OF POLITICAL ISSUES. DALE

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## Message Attributes

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